

MEMORANDUM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

6275

CONFIDENTIAL

SIGNED

ACTION

November 2, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI *W. Brzezinski*

SUBJECT:

Jacobo Timerman (U)

Jacobo Timerman, the Argentine newspaper editor and publisher, who was recently released from house arrest and expelled from Argentina, has asked to see you. He has been in New York since October 29 to receive the Hubert Humphrey Freedom Award from B'nai B'rith. In light of your personal intervention with President Videla on behalf of Mr. Timerman, the Department of State believes you should meet with him. (C)

Timerman last week told our Press Attache in Tel Aviv that he is now reluctant to write about his experiences in Argentina because he fears reprisals by the military against friends still in Argentina. For a similar reason, I believe a meeting could be counterproductive to our efforts to encourage human rights improvements in Argentina. Timerman's release was the culmination of such a vicious struggle between moderates and hardliners in the Argentine military that it provoked a coup (which was unsuccessful) by the hardliners. I believe that the moderates would consider your meeting with him as an unfriendly (rather than an appreciative) gesture, and they would be less likely to be accommodating to future cases. (C)

RECOMMENDATION:

That in lieu of a meeting, you sign the attached letter to Timerman conveying your congratulations.

Approve \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

The letter has been cleared by the speechwriters.

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Review 10/30/85

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to \_\_\_\_\_

(☒) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny (☒) Declassify

Exemptions b ( ) ( ) E.O. 13526 25x ( ) ( )

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With concurrence of: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date 12-2-16

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Department of State

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

#37

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-11. ADS-00 HA-05 PM-06 MSC-05 SP-02  
SS-15 CIAE-00 OODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 /067 W  
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R 251510Z OCT 79  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4307  
INFO USICA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 22920

STATE FOR NEA/ARA VAKY; HA FOR DERIAN  
USICA FOR AR

E.O. 12065: RDS 10/25/99 (DIETERICH, W.J.) OR-0  
TAGS: PEPR, PINR, PIHT, IS, AR  
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH ARGENTINE EXILE JACOB TIMERMAN  
1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESS ATTACHE DIETERICH, WHO KNEW HIM IN ARGENTINA DURING A 1972-74 TOUR THERE, TIMERMAN DISCUSSED INTER ALIA HIS INTERROGATION BY POLICE AUTHORITIES IN ARGENTINA, ANTI-SEMITISM ON THE ARGENTINA MILITARY RIGHT, HIS PERSONAL DILEMMA AS TO WHETHER TO WRITE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES, AND THE FUTURE OF ARGENTINE POLITICS. TIMERMAN WILL BE IN THE UNITED STATES TO RECEIVE AN AWARD FROM THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ON SATURDAY, OCT. 27. AFTER THAT HE PLANS TO TRAVEL TO NEW YORK WHERE HE EXPECTS TO SEE ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN. THEN HE WILL GO TO WASHINGTON FOR VARIOUS MEETINGS ON THE HILL, AT THE DEPARTMENT, AND AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

3. TIMERMAN SAID THAT THE MAIN FOCUS OF QUESTIONING DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT WAS HIS ROLE AS THE ARGENTINE "LEADER" OF AN ALLEGED WORLD ZIONIST CONSPIRACY; AND THAT THERE WAS VERY LITTLE EMPHASIS ON ANY LEFTIST OR TERRORIST CONNECTIONS. HE WAS ONCE TORTURED IN LA PLATA IN A ROOM WITH AN ORGANIZATION CHART WHICH SHOWED ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI AS THE LEADER OF THE CONSPIRACY. ON ANOTHER OCCASION HE WAS TOLD THAT HE WAS BEING BEATEN BECAUSE HE HAD DARED TO USE THE TERM LEFTIST-FASCISTS IN A CONVERSATION WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN, THE OBJECTION APPARENTLY BEING THAT HE HAD SLANDERED FASCISM. HE WAS ALSO QUESTIONED CONCERNING SUPPOSED CONTACTS BETWEEN MENACHEM BEGIN AND THE MONTONERO GUERRILLAS DURING A BEGIN VISIT TO ARGENTINA IN 1975. TIMERMAN BELIEVED THESE QUESTIONS STEMMED FROM THE FACT THAT BEGIN'S BOOK "WAR IN THE HOLY LAND" HAD BEEN FOUND AMONG MATERIALS USED BY THE MONTONEROS. TIMERMAN WAS BROUGHT FROM PRISON TO AN INTERVIEW WITH GEN. MARGUINDEGUY IN THE CASA ROSADA PRIOR TO A DERIAN VISIT. THE GENERAL INFORMED HIM THAT THE ARGENTINA GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE THAT PATT DERIAN WAS INTERESTED IN HIS CASE BECAUSE SHE WAS HIS COUSIN.

4. TIMERMAN ALSO REPORTS THAT HE BELIEVES LANUSSE'S EXPRESS SECRETARY EDGARDO SAJON DIED OF A HEART ATTACK DURING TORTURE BY ELECTRIC SHOCK. SINCE HE WAS A RELATIVELY YOUNG MAN, THE MILITARY DID NOT SUSPECT THAT HE HAD A HEART CONDITION.

5. TIMERMAN IS NOW RELUCTANT TO WRITE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES IN ARGENTINA BECAUSE HE FEARS REPRISALS BY THE MILITARY AGAINST FRIENDS STILL IN ARGENTINA. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS HE MENTIONED THAT ROBERT COX, EDITOR OF THE BUENOS AIRES MERALO, HAD SENT A MESSAGE TO HIM THROUGH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN BUENOS AIRES ASKING HIM

NOT TO MENTION COX IN ANY ARTICLES.

6. TIMERMAN ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE BELIEVES THE RIGHT-WING AND VERY ANTI-SEMITIC NEWSPAPER CABILDO IS FINANCED BY DIANA DE MASSOT, PUBLISHER OF HUEVA PROVINCIA IN BAHIA BLANCA. (NB: MRS. MASSOT WAS WELL-KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY, AND IF MEMORY SERVES, RECEIVED A MARIA MOORS CABOT OR IAPA AWARD IN 1973 OR 1974.)

7. AS TO THE FUTURE OF ARGENTINE POLITICS, TIMERMAN SAYS HE SEES A SITUATION IN WHICH MODERATE AND RIGHT WING ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY WILL COMPETE FOR PERONIST SUPPORT, WHICH MAY CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH ISABEL PERON WILL BE IN A POSITION TO DECIDE WHO RUNS ARGENTINA.

8. IN CONVERSATION WITH TIMERMAN ONE IS LEFT WITH A CHILLING IMPRESSION THAT HE IS SIMPLY REPORTING WHAT HE HAS EXPERIENCED AND BELIEVES. HE CHARACTERIZES THE ARGENTINE MILITARY RIGHT AS CLASSICALLY TOTALITARIAN AND ANTI-SEMITIC.

9. TIMERMAN IS NOW EMPLOYED BY THE IMPORTANT TEL AVIV DAILY HAARIV AND SEEMS COMFORTABLE WITH THAT FACT, ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SPENDING SOME TIME AT AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION IN THE US. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED COLUMBIA. THUS FAR HE HAS WRITTEN ONLY ON LATIN AMERICAN MATTERS, BUT IT IS TO BE EXPECTED THAT HE WILL BRANCH INTO BROADER DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL MATTERS. HE SAID THAT THE THEME OF A SPEECH HE WILL GIVE IN THE UNITED STATES WILL BE HUMAN RIGHTS AS THE IDEOLOGY OF THE EIGHTIES, AND ADDED THAT THE US

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADS-00 PM-06 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 HA-05 /067 W  
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R 251510Z OCT 79  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4308  
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 TEL AVIV 22920

WILL BE REAPING THE BENEFITS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY  
FOR YEARS TO COME. TIMERMAN STRESSES THAT IN HIS PUBLIC  
APPEARANCES HE WILL BE DISCUSSING HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL  
AND WILL AVOID SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON POLITICAL AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN ARGENTINA. HE IS ANXIOUS TO EXPRESS  
HIS GRATITUDE TO SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE DEPARTMENT AND  
THE WHITE HOUSE LEWIS

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